

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-05 IO-10 NIC-01 OMB-01 /072 W

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R 271739Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8309

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: CREATION OF A NEW SPD GROUP TO COMBAT

RADICALISM IN THE PARTY

SUMMARY: A GROUP OF CENTER-RIGHT SPD MEMBERS CALLED THE GODESBERG KREIS (OR SOMETIMESTHE LAHNSTEINER KREIS) HAS BEEN FORMED AND IS ABOUT TO PUBLISH A PAPER CALLED "GODESBERG AND THE PRESENT." THE PAPER, WHILE CALLING FOR SUPPORT OF THE 1959 GODESBERG PROGRAM, ALSO ATTACKS THE LEFT WING OF THE PARTY, ESPECIALLY THE JUSO'S. THE RESPONSE OF THE JUSO'S HAS BEEN TO DIRECT THEIR ACTION AT THE KREIS' LEADER, JUSTICE MINISTER VOGEL. END SUMMARY

1. THE LEADER OF THE GODESBERG KREIS IS JUSTICE MINISTER VOGEL AND THE STEERING COMMITTEE INCLUDES  
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STATE SECRETARIES HEINZ RUHNAU, HERMANN BUSCHFORT AND

KARL HEROLD, AS WELL AS DEPUTY SPD FRAKTION LEADERS HERBERT EHRENBURG AND GUENTHER METZGER. THE KREIS WAS FORMED TO COMBAT THE SPD LEFT WING IN THE HOPE, AS ONE MEMBER TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER, OF CONVINCING THE MIDDLE-OF-THE-ROAD GERMAN VOTER THAT THE JUSO'S AND THE LEFTISTS IN THE SPD ONLY REPRESENT A MINORITY OF THE PARTY MEMBERSHIP. SPD PARTY LEADER WILLY BRANDT RESPONDED TO PRESS STORIES ABOUT THE FORTHCOMING PUBLICATION (WHICH WAS WRITTEN BY BERLIN PROFESSORS LOEWENTHAL AND SCHWAN, AMONG OTHERS) WITH A MODERATE AND BALANCED STATEMENT. THE KREIS HOPES TO HOLD TWO MORE MEETINGS BEFORE THE SPD PARTY CONGRESS IN NOVEMBER IN ORDER TO STAKE OUT A POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE LEFT.

3. ONE OF THE JUSO LEADERS TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER RECENTLY THAT THE JUSO'S DIFFERENTIATED AMONG THREE SUB-GROUPS WITHIN THE GODESBERG KREIS. THE MOST ANTI-JUSO SEGMENT, HE SAID, WAS LED BY VOGEL AND THEREFORE THE JUSO'S WOULD DIRECT THEIR CRITICISM AGAINST THE JUSTICE MINISTER. THE SECOND SUB-GROUP WAS, IN HIS WORDS, THE "TECHNOCRATS" (E.G., LOEWENTHAL, SCHWAN, ETC.) AND THE THIRD SUB-GROUP WAS THE MORE CONCILIATORY SEGMENT LED BY HEINZ RUHNAU. THE JUSO'S, HE SAID, WERE IN CONTACT WITH RUHNAU BECAUSE THEY BELIEVED IT WAS POSSIBLE TO HAVE "DISCUSSIONS" WITH RUHNAU AND HIS SUPPORTERS IN THE GODESBERG KREIS.

4. THE GODESBERG KREIS CONTAINS SOME OVERLAPPING MEMBERSHIP WITH THE INFLUENTIAL RIGHT WING GROUP IN THE PARTY, THE SO-CALLED "SEWER WORKERS" (KANALARBEITER). ON FEBRUARY 25, THE KANALARBEITER HELD ONE OF THEIR SEMI-ANNUAL AFFAIRS AND OVER ONE HUNDRED SPD MEMBERS ATTENDED, INCLUDING WILLY BRANDT, HANNELORE SCHMIDT (THE CHANCELLOR WAS ILL), FORMER PRESIDENT HEINEMANN AND OTHER PROMINENT SPD

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PERSONALITIES. ONE OF THE PARTICIPANTS, WHO HAS BEEN  
EXTREMELY CRITICAL OF THE FORMER CHANCELLOR IN THE  
PAST, SAID THAT BRANDT GAVE A MORE LIVELY AND FIGHTING  
SPEECH THAN HE HAD GIVEN IN SOME TIME.

5. THERE ARE ESSENTIALLY TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT  
WITHIN THE SPD AS TO THE BEST WAY OF COPING WITH  
INNER PARTY DISAGREEMENTS DURING THE IMPORTANT LAENDER  
ELECTION CAMPAIGNS THIS YEAR. ONE GROUP, LED BY  
SCHMIDT AND BRANDT, FEELS THAT INNER  
PARTY DIFFERENCES SHOULD BE KEPT WITHIN CLOSED PARTY  
MEETINGS AND NOT TAKE PLACE IN PUBLIC DEBATE IN ORDER  
TO PRESENT AN IMAGE OF SOLIDARITY TO THE GERMAN VOTERS.  
THE OTHER GROUP, LED BY PEOPLE SUCH AS VOGEL, BELIEVES  
THAT IT IS NECESSARY FOR THE SPD MAJORITY TO REPUDIATE  
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AT LEAST SOME OF THE MORE EXTREME LEFT-WING VIEWS IN  
ORDER TO ATTRACT THE VOTES OF NON-PARTY MEMBERS.  
HOWEVER, SOME OF THESE PEOPLE FEEL THAT THE VOGEL  
APPROACH WOULD WORK ONLY IF  
BRANDT, SCHMIDT AND WEHNER WERE TO PUBLICLY SUPPORT  
THE ANTI-LEFTIST ACTION. THE JUSO  
RESPONSE TO THE GODESBERG KREIS HAS BEEN SOPHISTICATED  
TO THE DEGREE THAT THE JUSO'S HAVE SINGLED OUT VOGEL  
AS THE TARGET TO ATTACK AND HAVE NOT FORCED, AT LEAST  
FOR THE PRESENT, A DIRECT CONFRONTATION WITH THE SPD  
RIGHT WING. THESE JUSO TACTICS ARE BASED ON THE  
ASSESSMENT THAT BY MAINTAINING A DIALOGUE WITH RUHNAU

AND OTHERS THEY CAN MODERATE THE RIGHT WING'S POSITION  
WHICH HAS A GREATER INFLUENCE AMONG THE RANK AND FILE  
OF PARTY MEMBERS THAN THE LEFTWING DOES.  
HILLENBRAND

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## Message Attributes

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